Import of vegetable oils

3703. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether huge amount is spent on import of vegetable oils;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the quantity of vegetable oils imported during each of the last three years and the amount spent thereon;

(c) whether Government propose to take any steps to increase domestic production of vegetable oils;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the achievements expected to be made in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) There has been no import of edible vegetable oils on Government account by State Trading Corporation (STC) for Public Distribution System during the last six years. Since there has been a continuous excess of demand over domestic supply of edible oils, the Government, with a view to making this item of mass consumption easily available to consumers at reasonable prices, has allowed import of edible vegetable oils, except coconut oil, under Open General Licence (OGL). The entrepreneurs import edible vegetable oils depending upon their commercial judgement.

The quantity and value of edible vegetable oils imported during the last three years have been as under:—

Year (Apr.-March)	Import of Edible Vegetable Oils	
	Quantity (in lakh tonnes)	Value (Rs. in crores)
2002-2003	43.65	8779.64
2003-2004	52.90	11683.24
2004-2005	45.42	10755.65

Source : Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics.

(c) to (e) Steps taken by the Government to increase the production of edible oils in the country include enhanced incentives to the farmers through fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) of major oilseeds, implementation of Centrally Sponsored Integrated Scheme for Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm & Maize (ISOPOM) in certain States, financial assistance for Oil Palm Development, assistance provided for purchase of breeder seed, production of foundation seed, production and distribution of certified seed, integrated pest management etc. The domestic production of oilseed is expected to rise to the level of 266.97 lakh tonnes during 2005-06 against its production estimates of 243.54 lakh tonnes in 2004-05.

Export of wheat and rice through Wagah Border

3704. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite opening of trade through Wagah border, Government have stopped allocation of wheat and rice for export purposes;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have reviewed the question of revival of wheat and rice exports through this border and otherwise, in view of the prospects of good harvest in the ensuing season, if so, the decision taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Export of wheat and rice through Wagah Border to Pakistan is not possible at present as these do not form part of Pakistan's positive list of 773 items.

Further, there is no commercial export/import of any goods to and from Pakistan through this route except import of dry fruits from Afghanistan in transit *via* Pakistan.